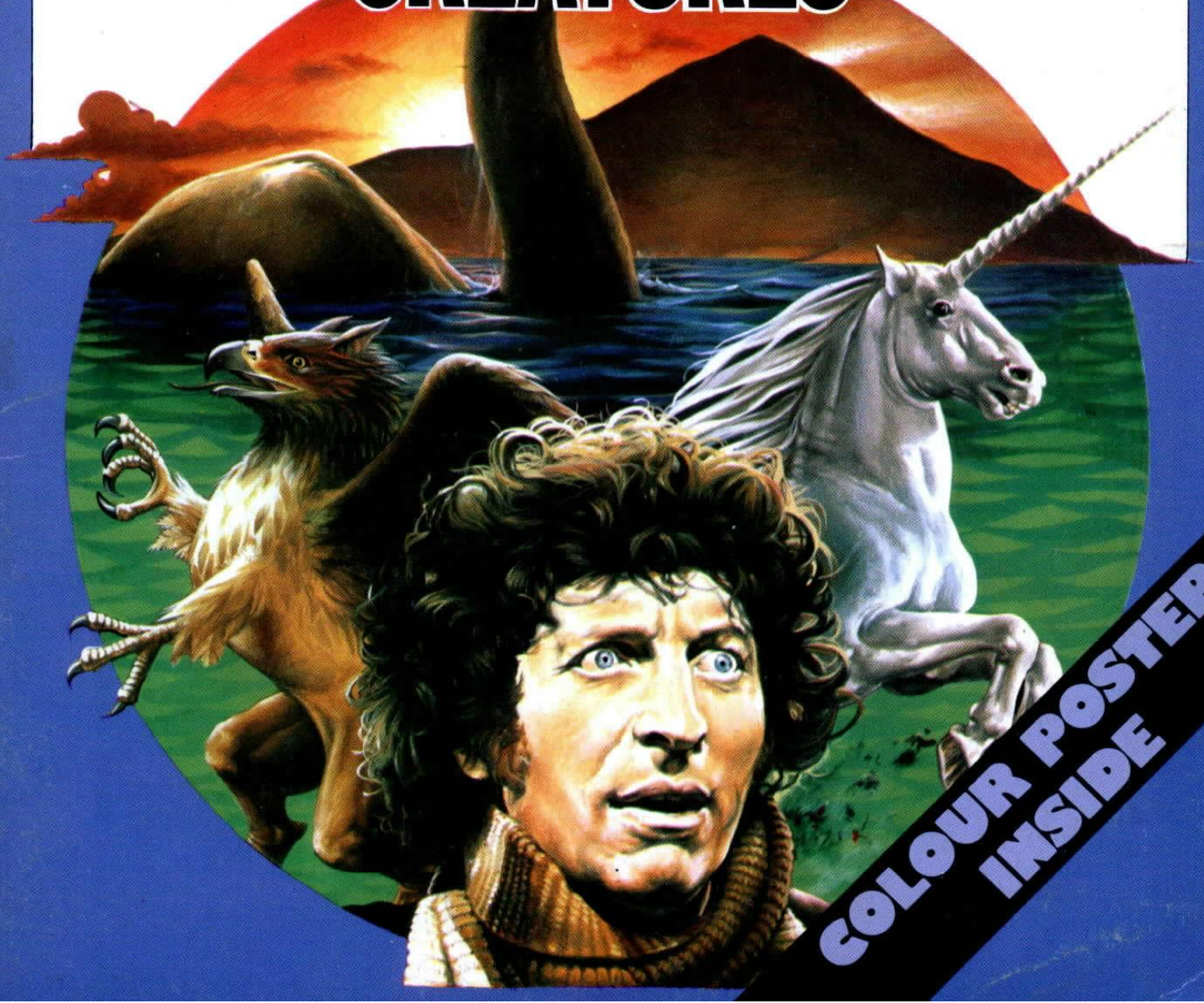
TARGET

DOCTOR WHO DISCOVERS

STRANGE AND MYSTERIOUS CREATURES



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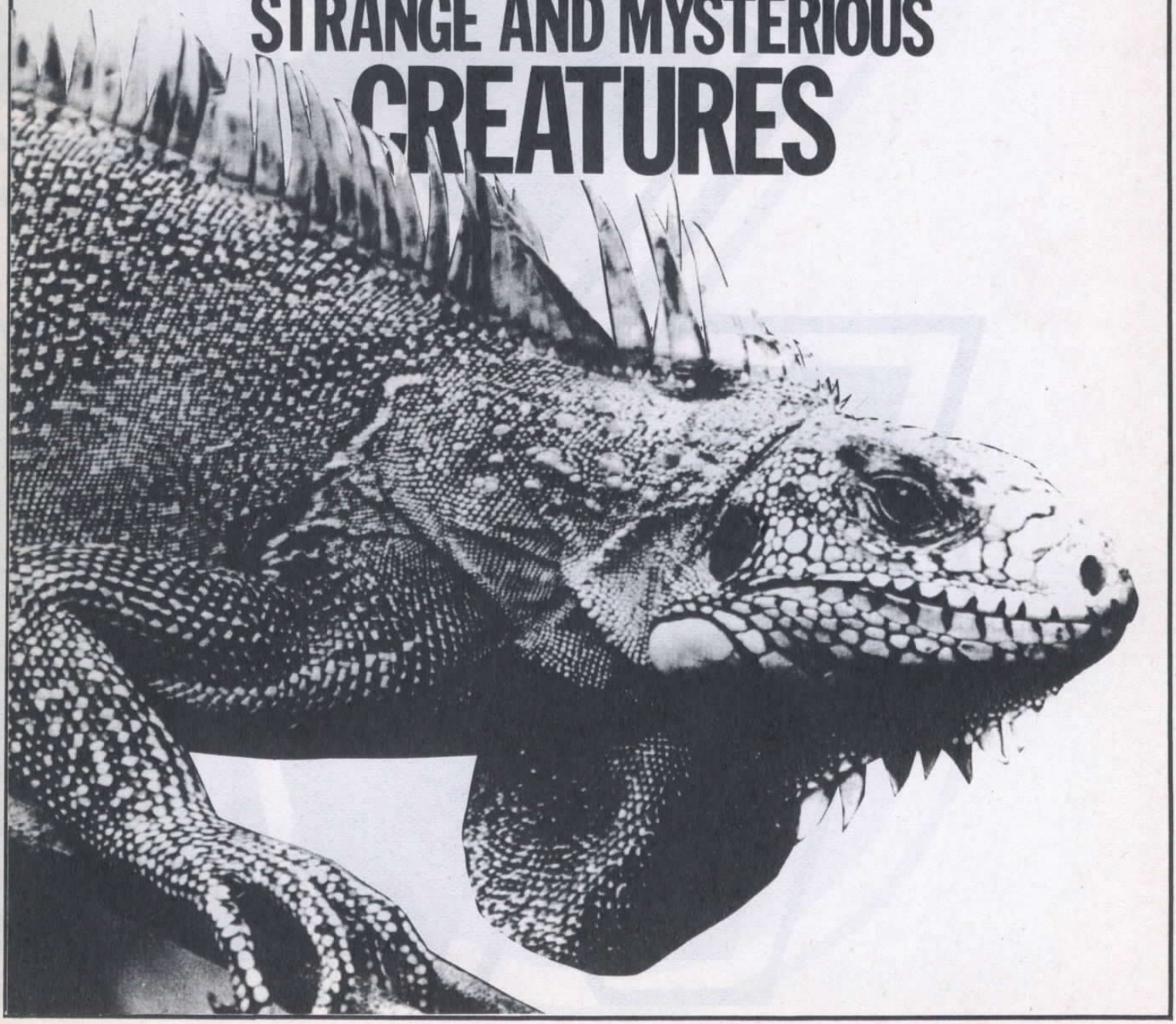

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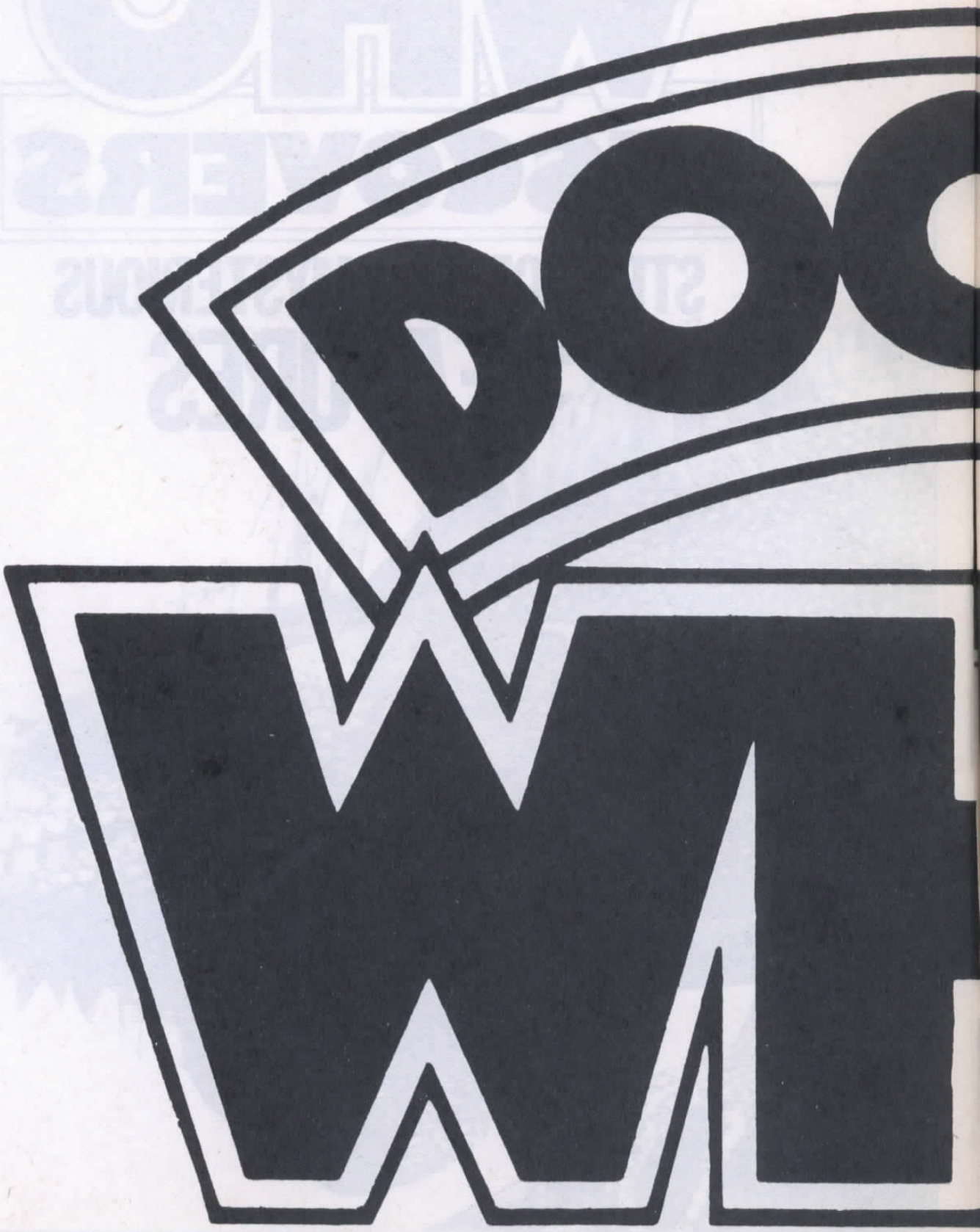

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Designed by Frank Ainscough

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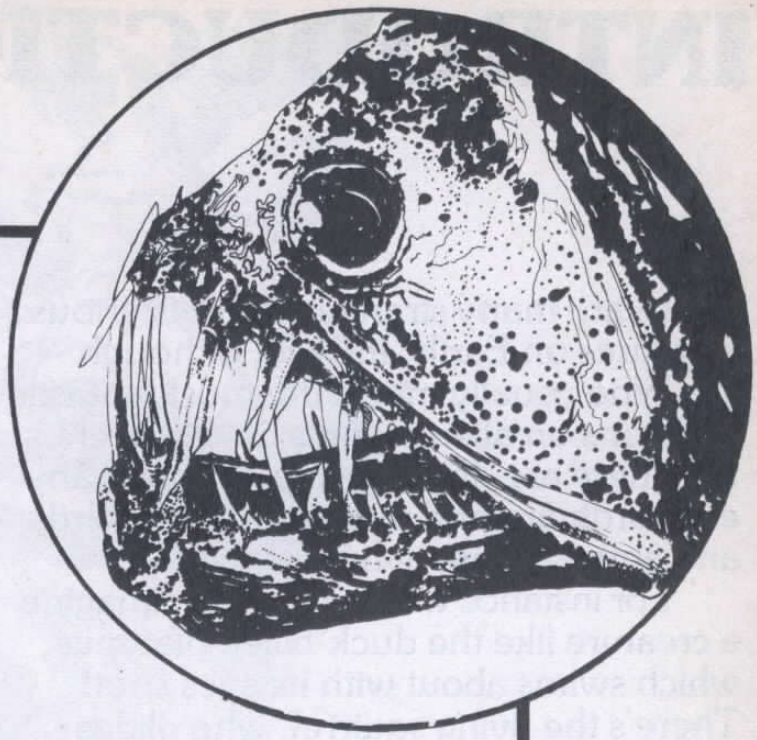

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INTRODUCTION

There are many strange and mysterious creatures on Earth. Indeed, although Dr. Who usually meets the most fantastic creations on alien planets he discovers that there are, in their way, just as many extraordinary and marvellous fish, birds and animals here at home.

For instance who could even imagine a creature like the duck-billed platypus, which swims about with its eyes shut! There's the flying squirrel, who glides from one tree to another on his own parachute; and the clever little prairie dog, who posts sentries to watch for danger.

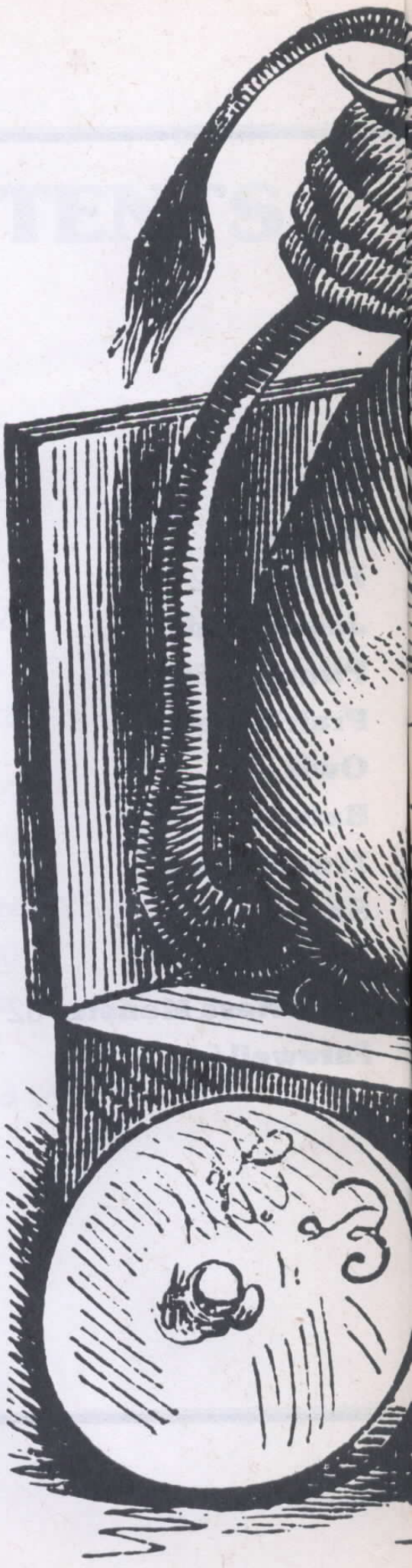
In the seas of the earth there are other strange creatures. Did you know that the octopus can 'jet' through the water? Or that the silver hatchet carries its own light to lure victims into its mouth?

And then, of course, there are all those mysterious creatures of legend.

Thanks to the intervention of one of the Doctor's cosmic enemies, who conjures up these creatures, the Doctor sometimes discovers more than he would really like.

He comes face to face with King Kong, the giant ape, not to mention the dreaded Dracula. After that, there are also the creatures that just **might** exist. Nobody really knows if there **is** an Abominable Snowman or a Loch Ness Monster, but as the Doctor discovers, there are arguments for and against.

So now you can join the Doctor as he begins his series of encounters with all these mysterious creatures, real — and imagined.



Some creatures are so strange that it is hard to believe they are real. The Doctor remembered one such incident very well. He had to visit Europe at the end of the 18th century — as a matter of fact he was on the trail of The Master — when a curious 'new' animal was discovered.

This is how it happened. A sailor arrived in London from Australia and went to see one of the leading Professors of natural history at the British Museum.

The sailor had brought with him the body of a strange mole-like animal which had a rubbery beak like a duck. The Professor had never seen anything like it. At first he thought he might be the victim of a hoax. But then the Professor sent it to a colleague in Germany for another opinion.

"Of course it was a real animal," snorted the Doctor. "But there are people who won't believe the evidence of their own eyes..."

The Doctor was being a little unfair. After all he did have the advantage of **knowing** that it was the extraordinary duck-billed platypus.

Far from being 'new' the platypus is a very old and primitive creature, neither mammal nor reptile but somewhere in between. It has characteristics of both because it lays eggs **and** nurses its young. Today the platypus is found only in Australia where efforts are being made to protect it and stop it being hunted for its silky fur.

The platypus is a very good swimmer, and lives around rivers and lakes, pushing through the water with its webbed feet and breathing through nostrils at the top of its beak. Its beak is very sensitive, and when the platypus searches for food in the water it relies on it entirely, closing its eyes and ears!

"Now I'll tell you something else about the platypus," said the Doctor. "It has a distant cousin which is just as strange, called an echidna." The Doctor smiled happily at being able to display his knowledge.

What's more, he was right again. The echidna, or spiny anteater also lives in Australia and shares with the platypus the characteristics of laying eggs and nursing its young.

In fact the mother echidna hatches her offspring by holding the egg in her pouch and then curling her body around it. When the baby is hatched it begins to feed on milk produced from the surfaces of the pouch itself. The offspring soon begins to grow the thick spines which cover the adult, and when these start to make mother feel uncomfortable junior gets kicked out!

A fully grown adult is between sixteen and twenty inches long and has a cone-shaped tongue which can be stretched out to reach into ants' nests.

The echidna defends itself when danger threatens by digging a shallow hole in the ground to leave only its spines showing. Like the male platypus, the male echidna has a fleshy spur on its hind legs which can exude a poison but neither of these animals use this weapon very often.

"So you see," said the Doctor, "That sailor who brought the platypus to Europe for the experts to look at knew what he was doing. But on the whole the sailors of old were ignorant and superstitious."

The platypus feels for food with his rubbery bill

The echidna forages for ants with his long snout

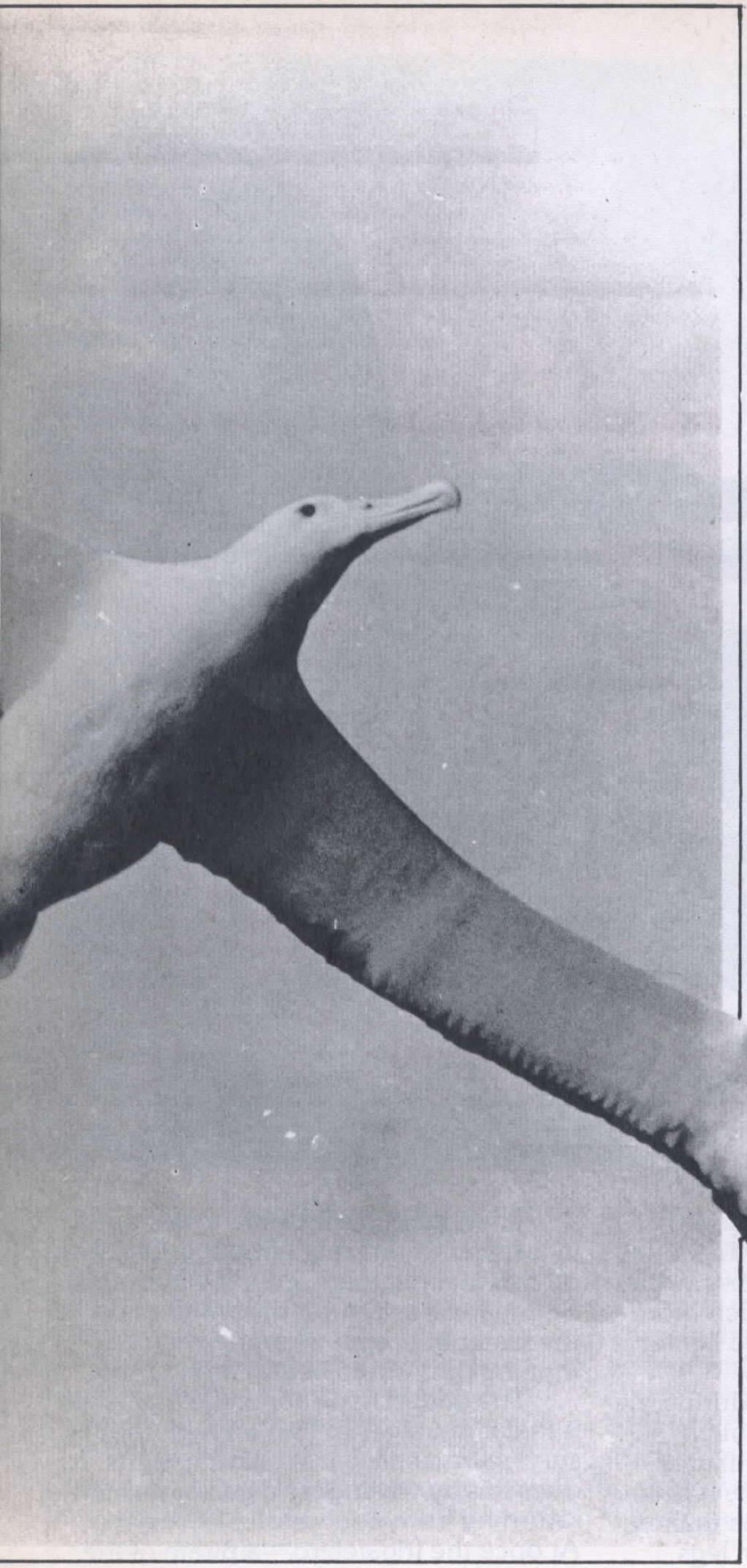
One of these superstitions concerned the albatross, a bird which lives mostly in the Southern Hemisphere. There are thirteen different species, the largest of which is the wandering albatross with a wing-span of more than 11 feet. Like Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, sailors considered it was bad luck to kill an albatross which they thought was a reincarnation of drowned colleagues. They also believed that when one of these big birds with its expressionless face came into sight and began to follow their boat it heralded the approach of winds and storms.

"In this the sailors were not being entirely foolish," said the Doctor magnanimously. "Allow me to explain. You see the albatross is an extremely heavy bird and it needs a strong wind to help it take off and then stay in the air, which it does by gliding in the air currents for much of the time. So the chances were that albatrosses did accompany rougher weather." In this way some albatrosses can fly for hundreds of miles, but their breeding grounds are usually to be found at the top of cliffs where it is easy for them to take off by simply 'stepping-off' the cliff edge.

Mostly these nests are on remote islands and are selected by the males who arrive first. When the female arrives she is surrounded by several male birds who bow to her and spread their wings. The female then selects her mate and goes off with him. They perform a courtship dance, preening and making a strange braying noise.

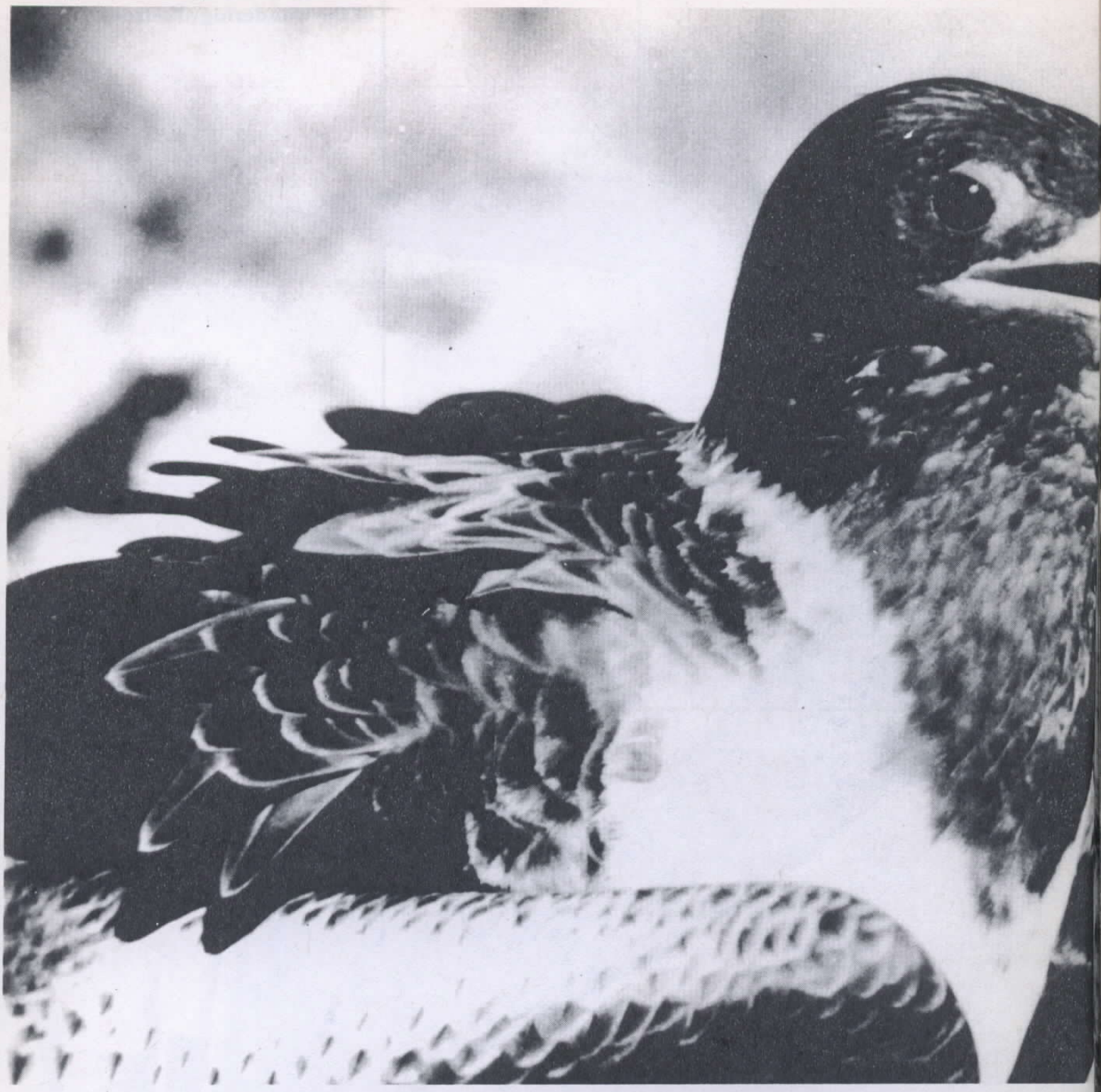
An albatross can live for a very long time. Wandering albatrosses have been known to survive for up to 70 years.

The albatross likes to nest on cliffs



The huge wing-span of the wandering albatross

The frigatebird is a pirate of the skies



Another bird which can cruise for many miles over the oceans is the frigatebird. More than a yard long, with a seven-foot wingspan, it is much more muscular than the albatross and lighter, too, thanks to its hollow bones.

Frigatebirds are black, but during the mating season a small throat pouch called a gular sac on the male inflates and becomes a vivid red colour. It gets so big that this heart-shaped sac makes the bird look like a valentine on legs.

These curious birds are to be found in tropical waters, but although they live off fish their feathers are not waterproof. So frigatebirds cannot dive or land on the water but catch what they can by dipping their sharp beaks into the sea.

The oddest thing about the frigatebird is that it manages to find enough food to survive by stealing it from other birds. It does this by waiting for a gull or pelican returning from a successful fishing trip. At once the frigatebird—a pirate of the

skies, really—zooms in to the attack. It chases after its victim, pulling its wing or legs until the startled bird either drops the fish it has just caught or regurgitates its freshly eaten meal!

The frigatebird immediately dives after the dropped food and catches it before it lands in the water.

"What a disgraceful habit," said the Doctor, who took a strong moral view on such matters. "And not only that, but it's most unhygienic."

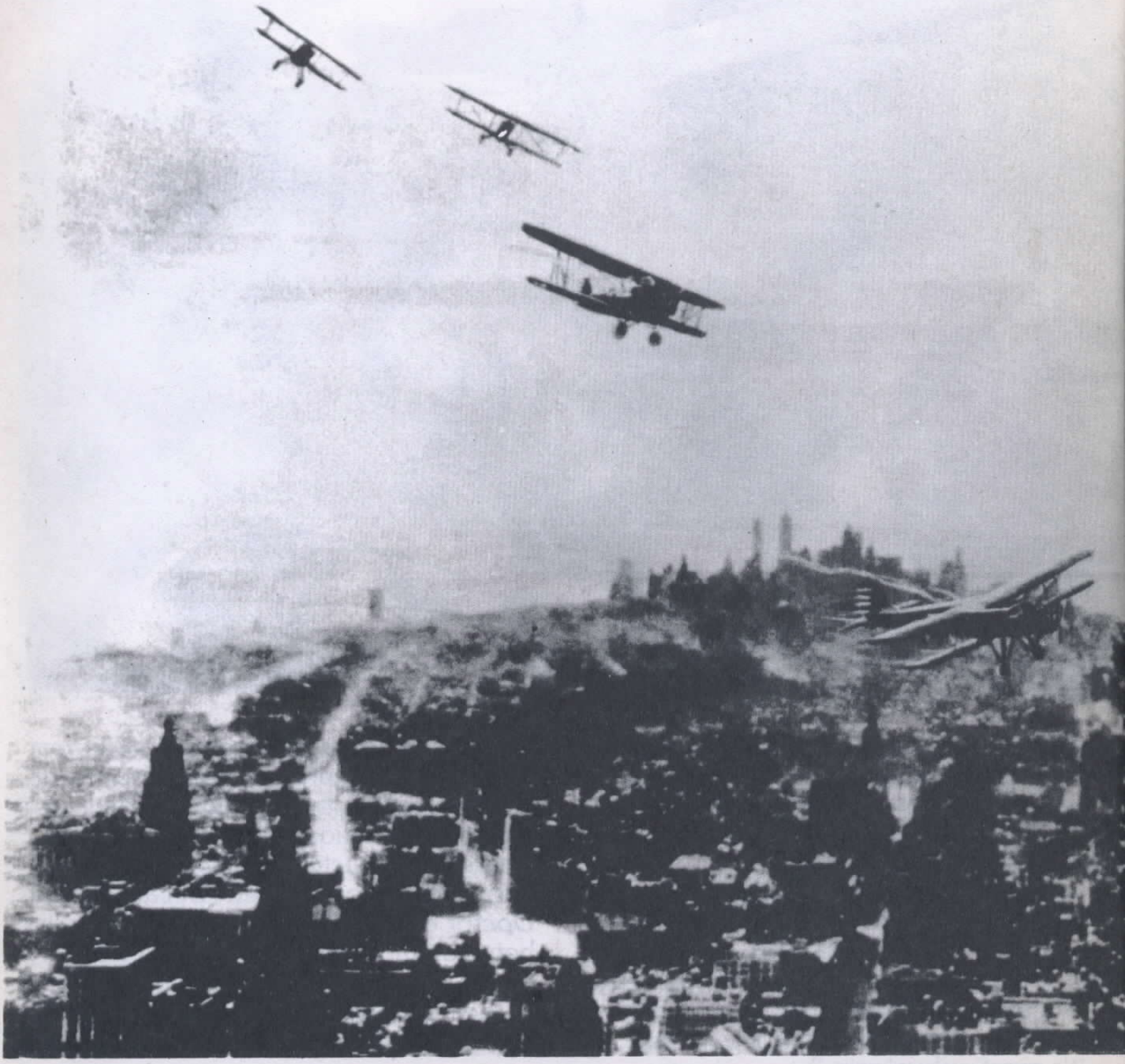
Nevertheless it was clear that a great many odd creatures existed. They were all very real but they could have been the creations of fiction, so strange were they. This set the Doctor musing, which was very unfortunate indeed. Because as the Doctor began thinking about this thin line between fact and fiction, and about the many mythical creatures which existed in their own world of make-believe . . . it happened.

Somewhere one of the Doctor's cosmic enemies seized the opportunity to turn the Doctor's thoughts into physical reality. The entire Tardis shook with the loudest roar the Doctor had ever heard.

The Doctor put a hand to his forehead. Was he dreaming? What was happening? He was in the streets of New York and before him towered the monstrous shape of an ape.

The Doctor watched in awe as it began to tear up the tracks of a subway train. Everywhere people were running in panic as this fearsome creature literally tore the streets apart with its huge hands.

"Most extraordinary," said the Doctor, quite forgetting to run for shelter



along with everyone else. "This appears to be a manifestation of the legendary giant ape, King Kong." Manifestation or not, slabs of paving stones which looked very real came hurtling in the Doctor's direction, and he decided to withdraw.

The Doctor recalled that King Kong had been brought in chains to New York from the mysterious and time-forgotten Skull Island but while being exhibited on stage he had broken free. At least this was the story related in the first famous film made in 1933 — and now the Doctor seemed to have become part of the set!

He was powerless as a mysterious force drew him through the streets of

King Kong makes his last stand

Manhattan until he found himself beneath what was then the world's highest building, the Empire State. The Doctor peered upwards. On the very summit stood King Kong, roaring and beating his chest, the self-styled conqueror of New York.

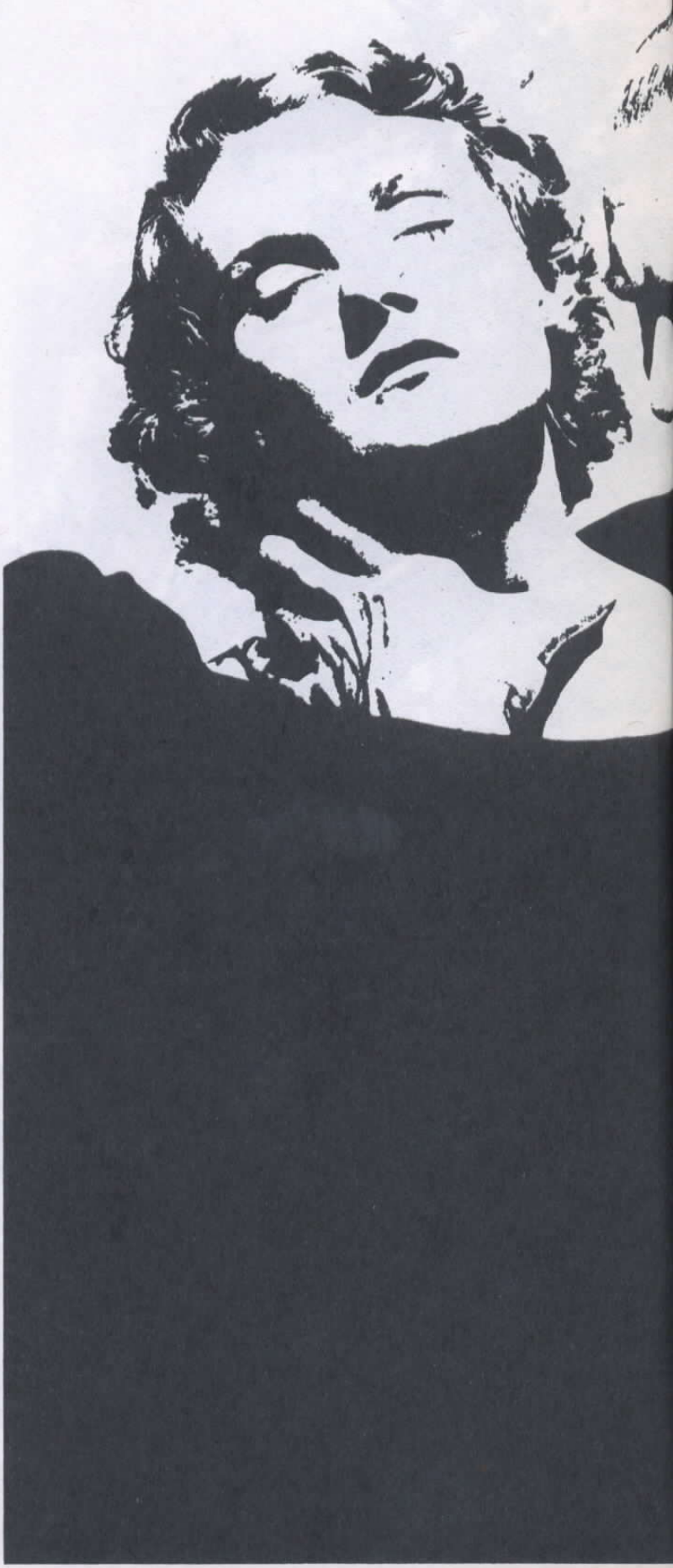
"Look, it's got a woman up there with it," shouted someone in the crowd. The crowd gasped as King Kong lifted her in a mighty paw, and then laid her gently down while in the distance came the sound of approaching fighter aircraft.

The giant ape, who had apparently grown fond of this attractive lady, now prepared for his last stand.

The aircraft, their machine guns stuttering, zoomed in on King Kong. The Doctor found all this rather sad; after all it was not Kong's fault that he had been brought to New York.

Of course, bravely though he roared, King Kong was no match for the aircraft, and the mighty ape who had ruled over all the other strange beasts of Skull Island, toppled from his lofty perch to the pavement hundreds of feet below.

Above: How King Kong met his heroine! Left, his capture on Skull Island – according to the original film.



The scene faded and for a moment the Doctor hoped he was about to find himself back in the real world. Well, it certainly seemed like it, though just where he was the Doctor did not know. It was very dark, apart from a light glimmering in the distance which looked as if it could be a country inn. The Doctor walked along a lane until he came to the inn. Although the Doctor, with his long scarf and hat, looked distinctly odd compared with the 19th century clothes worn by the few people in the saloon, nobody so much as looked at him. The Doctor displayed his brightest smile: "Excuse me, but could you tell me where I am?"

"Transylvania," somebody said. "And if you want a bed for the night you can get one at the castle up the road." At this there was general laughter, although the Doctor failed to see the joke.

"Thank you," he said politely. He had not gone far when he was stopped by a strange apparition in a flowing black cloak and black hat.

Suddenly the Doctor felt a cold shiver. This time the awful truth dawned; his powerful adversary somewhere in the cosmos had brought him face to face

with one of the most dreaded and mysterious creatures of them all, the vampire Count Dracula. Dracula grasped the Doctor's shoulders with powerful hands; his eyes turned a glowing red and as he turned back his lips two hideous fangs appeared.

The Doctor struggled desperately. He knew that once those fangs sank into his neck he, too, would become one of the half-dead, condemned to sleep in a coffin by day and rise in search of victims by night.

The Doctor remembered all he could about vampires. They did not like garlic which didn't help as he wasn't carrying any. They could only be killed by driving a stake through their hearts while they lay in their coffins during the day. What else?

From his pocket he drew an old silver watch. Vampires hated silver and it was said they could be killed with a silver bullet.

Immediately the Doctor held the watch in front of Dracula's face the vampire released his hold, and retreated, hissing very nastily. The Doctor sighed with relief and once again tried to break the sinister force conjuring him into the presence of these mythical creatures.

But as this had no effect the Doctor concentrated very hard on something less ferocious. He thought about the unicorn, because he would rather meet one of those than some unknown monster.

The unicorn is a one-horned beast. It may have the shape of an ass, a goat, a horse, an antelope or even a rhinoceros. Sometimes unicorns have been a mixture of these creatures, but most were thought to be friendly.

Nobody is sure how the legend of the unicorn began, although it may have been due to travellers returning to Europe in Greek times having seen rhinoceros in India and 'embroidering' on what they had seen.

The important fact about the unicorn is that its horn has magical qualities, and even poison, drunk from a cup made from unicorn's horn is rendered harmless. In the Middle Ages, where barons were always being poisoned, horned cups were in great demand and great value was placed upon them.

Having thought all these thoughts it was just the Doctor's misfortune that the unicorn **he** met was the dreadful demon Amduscias, who had a human body. Hurriedly the Doctor began thinking about Centaurs . . . .

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Centaurs are the creation of ancient Greek mythology. They were thought to be half-human, half horse and often became savage and uncontrolled.

Probably the idea of the centaur arose from the early cattle breeders of Northern Greece, who spend a great deal of time on horseback and whose manners were not very agreeable.

The Doctor wasn't sure whether to give it a friendly pat, say "Good Morning" or just pretend it wasn't there.

This dilemma was soon solved. The Doctor felt the forces around him weaken, and his own will become stronger once more. He was anxious to continue his tour discovering all sorts of strange creatures but he wanted to see some real ones again.

"Ah, there we are," said the Doctor in his most satisfied voice. "A squirrel flying through the air. Definitely real."

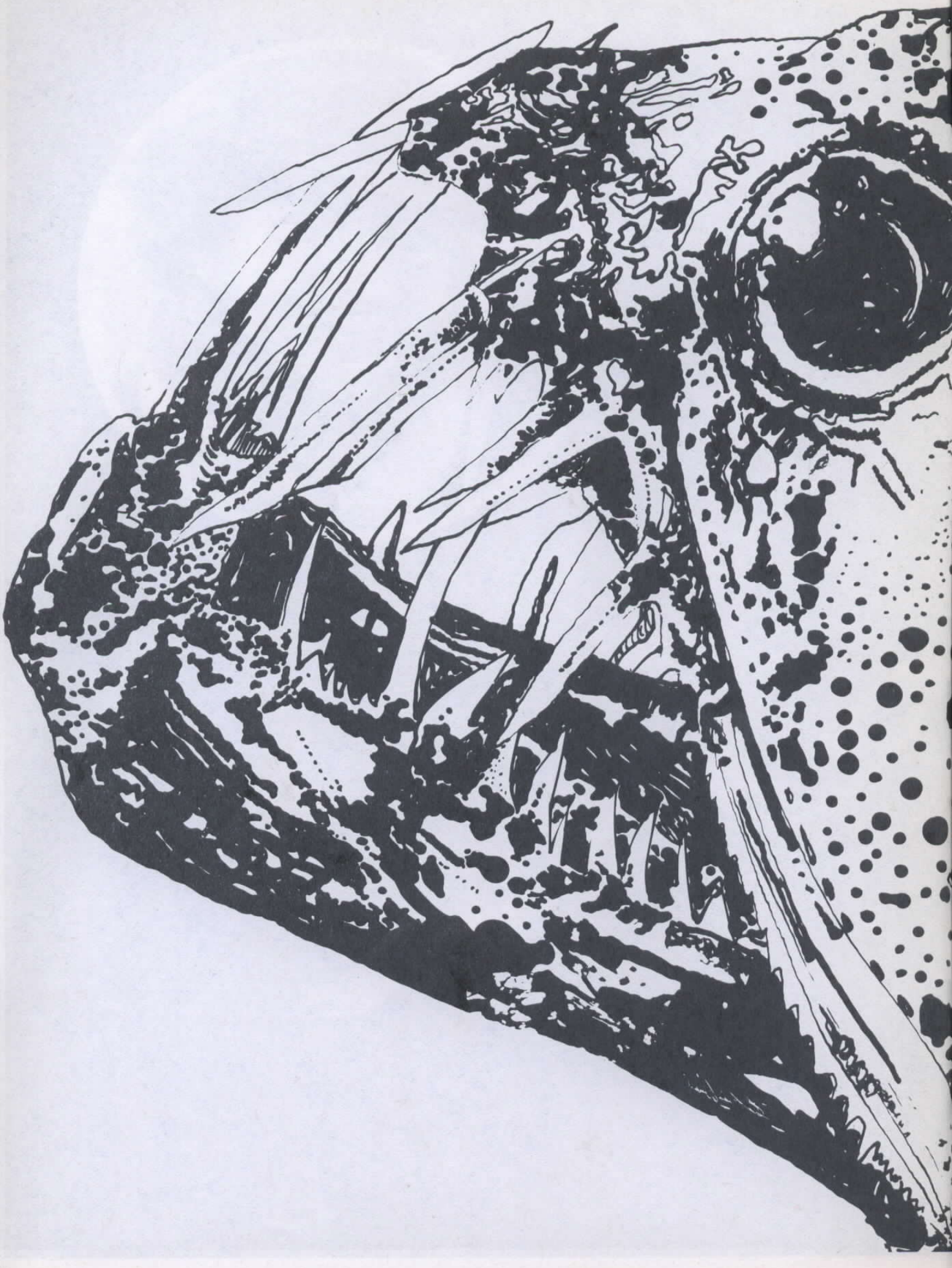
It certainly was, too. There **are** such things as flying squirrels. They are to be found in various parts of the world from the Himalayas to the United States.

They do not fly in the strict sense of the word but, with the help of a thin membrane that extends each side of their body between their front and hind legs, they can glide up to one hundred feet from one tree to another.

The membrane acts as a kind of parachute and the flying squirrel is able to take these great leaps, its long silky tail outstretched behind it. Some experts believe that the tail helps the squirrel to 'steer': others say it controls the squirrel's speed.

Centaurs may have been 'ranchers' who lived in ancient Greece

A flying squirrel glides through the air



Deep down in the oceans of the world there exist many strange creatures. Traditionally these uncharted depths are the home of sea-monsters, but not all the forms of life to be found hundreds of feet below the surface are large.

For example the viper fish, Chauliodus, was discovered 200 years ago by an English botanist, Sir Hans Sloane, and is only six inches long. Like many fish which live at depths where little sunlight ever penetrates the viper fish's grey-green skin is covered in photophores — light producing organs — which give it an irridescent glow.

The viper fish even has photophores on the roof of its mouth which attract other unwary fish with their light. But once within reach of the viper fish's sabre-like teeth their curiosity proves fatal!

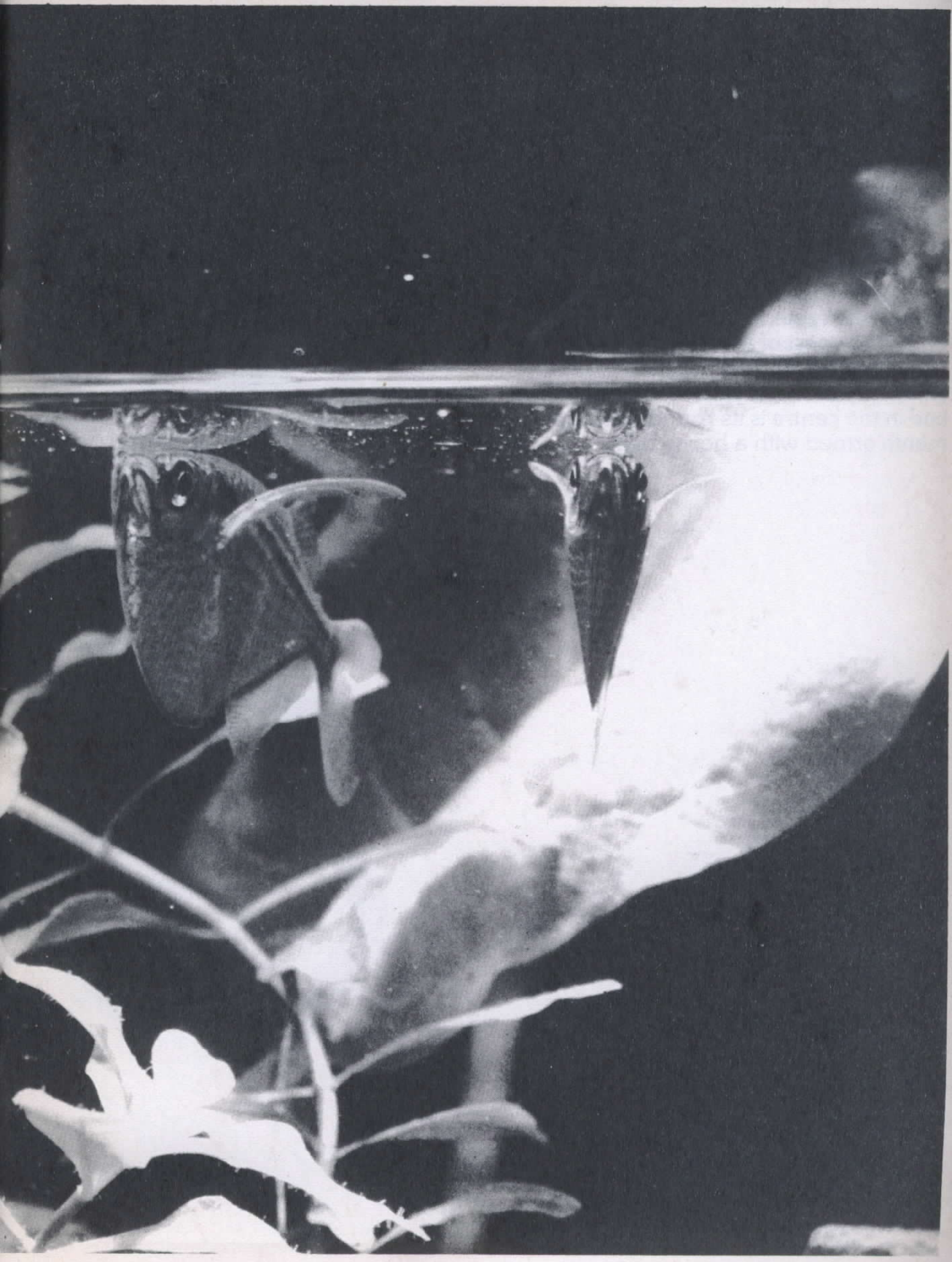
Another kind of abyssal fish — as these residents of the darkest depths are called — is the silver hatchet. Scarcely more than two or three inches long it is very broad at its head and narrow at the tail so it does have a hatchet-like shape.

Its most striking features are its huge eyes, protruding like enormous lenses from its head, no doubt developed to pick up the smallest glint of light in the fish's dark environment.

The silver hatchet is found as deep as 10,000 feet below the surface and will hunt for food up to 300 feet from the surface. But the silver hatchet will never swim to the surface of its own accord although sometimes it becomes trapped in a rising current — and gets caught in a fisherman's net. But this happens only rarely and in fact the silver hatchet was discovered only thirty years ago.

The viper fish glows with its own light

Hatchet fish in an aquarium

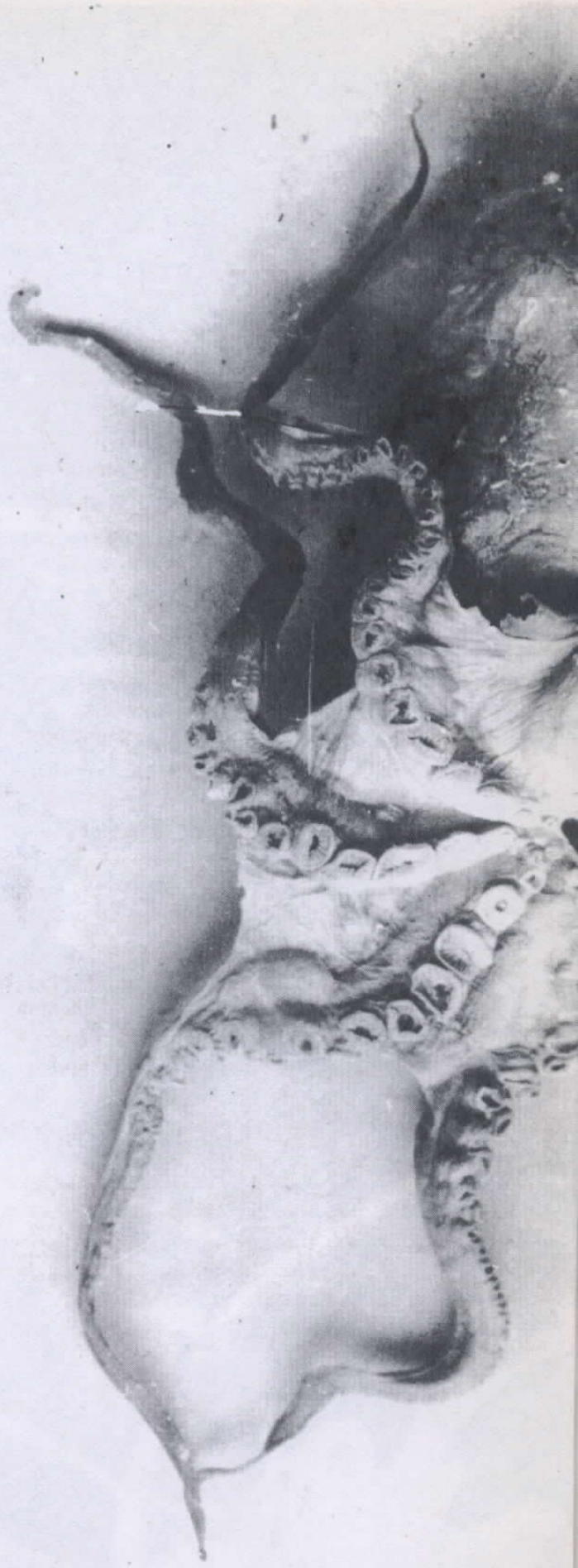


At the other end of the scale there is the octopus, which according to the tales of old-time mariners, grew to an enormous size and could drag entire ships beneath the waves with its tentacles.

Along the length of his eight arms the octopus has about 120 pairs of suckers. They work like suction-pads and once the octopus grips his prey there is almost no way of escape.

Nobody has ever seen a giant octopus, though perhaps they do exist deep in the ocean, and it is said that a tentacle 20 feet long was once washed up off the coast of Newfoundland.

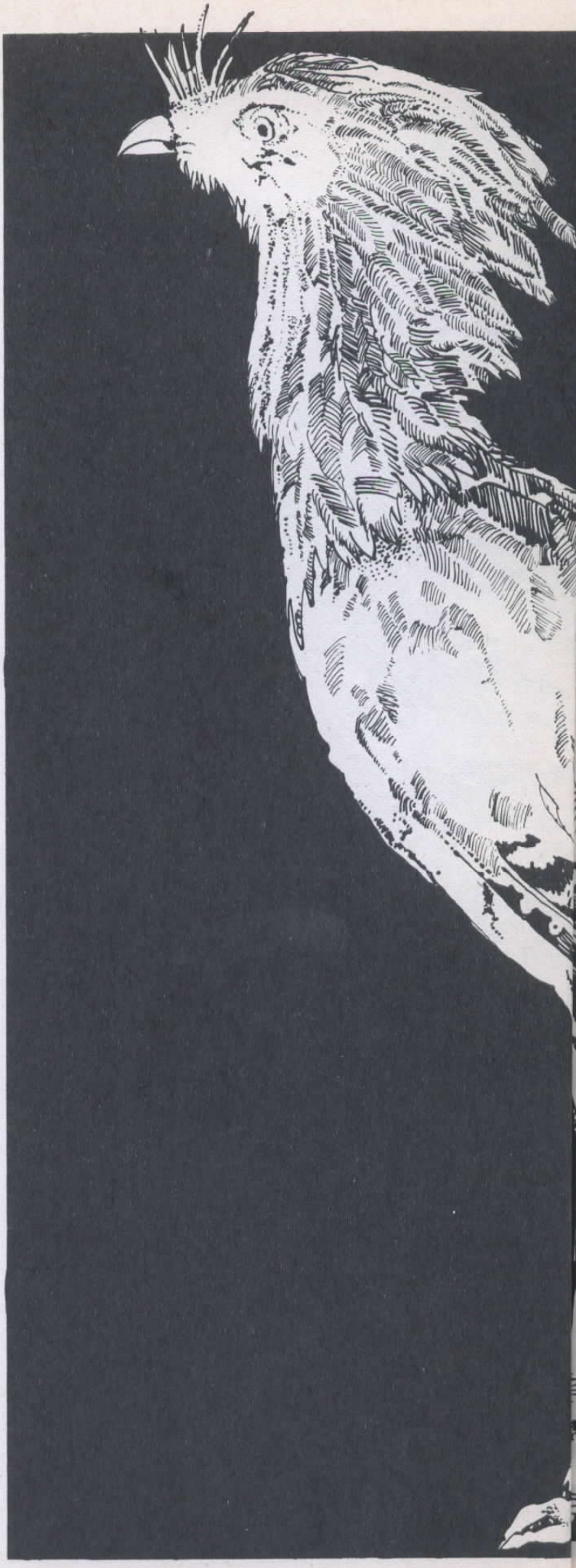
The eight arms of the octopus are joined at the base by a strong thick web, and in the centre is its round thick-lipped mouth armed with a horny beak.



Inside its mouth is a tongue covered in spines, and a bag of poison with which it paralyses its victims. Amongst the other attributes of the octopus is a funnel-shaped tube growing from its head through which it can squirt water with great force and so 'jet' itself along when it wants to swim very quickly.

Finally the octopus is able to squirt an inky-black liquid which it does when it wants to confuse any attackers. The Doctor looked warily at the octopus. "It is not at all surprising that very few creatures try to make a meal of the octopus, though he does get swallowed whole by whales," he said. "Personally I prefer to meet things with two arms, rather than eight!"

The octopus showing his 'suction pads'



The Doctor decided to continue his tour with a visit to the continent of South America where some of the world's strangest creatures are to be found. There is a good explanation for this since many ancient species have survived only in South America for geological reasons and because man has not made such great inroads into the natural environment there.

He was soon inspecting a curious two-foot high bird which was making a loud yelping noise rather like a dog. As the Doctor approached it put its head down and ran off very quickly.

It was a cariama, and although these birds can fly, they do so very clumsily and usually keep both their feet on the ground. Cariamas are descendants of the giant flightless birds which inhabited the South American continent millions of years ago and the Doctor recalled only too well his encounter with the 10-foot tall Diatryma when he was discovering prehistoric animals.

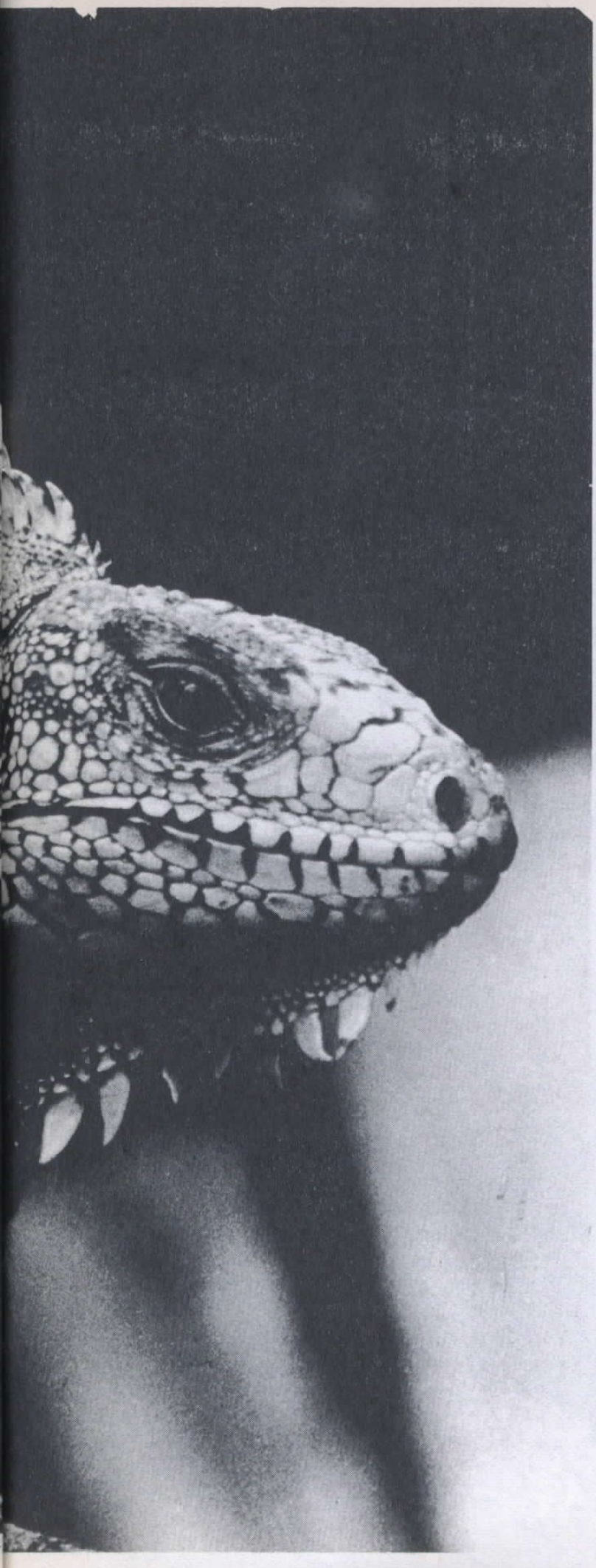
Another ancient creature to be found in that continent is the sloth, so-called because of its slow and sluggish movements. Sloths spend most of the day sleeping; usually they do this hanging upside down by their strong claws from the branches of the forests where they live.

Indeed sloths have spent so many hundreds of years upside down that, unlike most mammals whose hair parts on their back and falls down the sides, the sloth's hair parts underneath its body and falls towards its back.

Sloths can defend themselves by lashing out with their strong claws but more often their best defence is camouflage. Since they stay so still other animals often do not see them. In the rainy season they become even harder for any predator to spot. Then the algae, microscopic plants which they have in their hair, turn green.

The cariama bird walks more than it flies

A sloth carrying one of its young



As the sloth hangs from his forest tree it is quite likely he will be sharing it with another strange creature, the iguana. Iguanas look as if they have survived from the very earliest times of earth and in fact they look so like dinosaurs that film-makers have often used enlargements of them as prehistoric 'monsters'.

However the Doctor knew that the largest iguana he was likely to meet in South America would be six feet long, and even then most of its length was in the tail. The iguana climbs trees in search of leaves and fruit, but it can also run and swim.

There are many different species of iguana and two of the rarest kinds live in the Galapagos Islands off the South American coast, and were first described by Charles Darwin.

One of these is the marine iguana, which is black like the volcanic rock of the islands. The marine iguanas grow to about four feet, and the female lays only two eggs at a time unlike the more common species which may lay as many as eighty.

A snuffling and crashing in the undergrowth almost made the Doctor climb a tree himself! But he remembered both his dignity and the fact that there were unlikely to be any ferocious monsters in these parts.

Along the path came what looked like a herd of small pigs. There were more than thirty of them, and they were obviously wild. "Ah, yes, these must be peccaries," said the Doctor, peering a little distastefully at them — they did smell rather.

"But why are they called peccaries? I'll tell you — the name comes from a South American Indian language and it means 'a creature which makes many paths in the woods'." The peccaries trundled on through the forest. They are social animals which tend to travel together in bands. Often they hunt together as well,

The iguana looks like a prehistoric monster

It doesn't do to get too close to a peccary!

The jaguarundi is the shyest of wild cats

combining to surround and either kill or drive off an enemy like a rattlesnake. The distinctive odour of the peccary at which the Doctor had wrinkled his nose comes from a musk gland on the pig's back. One of its purposes is to put off any enemies; but it seems also to serve as a way of marking out territory, which the peccaries do by rubbing their backs against trees and rocks around their homes.

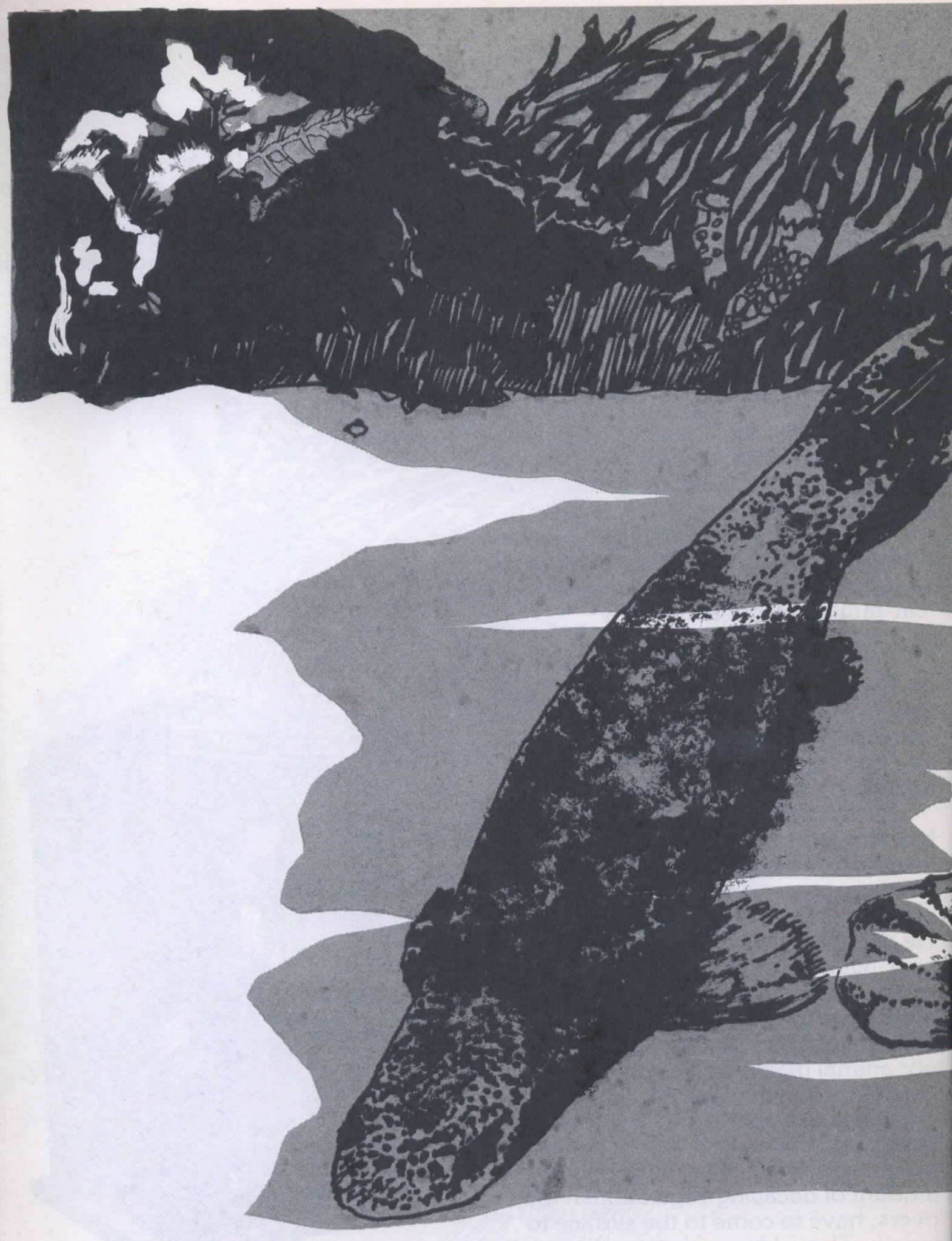
"Well, it would certainly keep me away," said the Doctor, blowing his nose with a very large handkerchief.

It seemed to be a very good day for jungle noises. A loud hissing and spitting noise made the Doctor turn, just in time to see one of the most secretive of the 'cat' family disappear into the undergrowth.

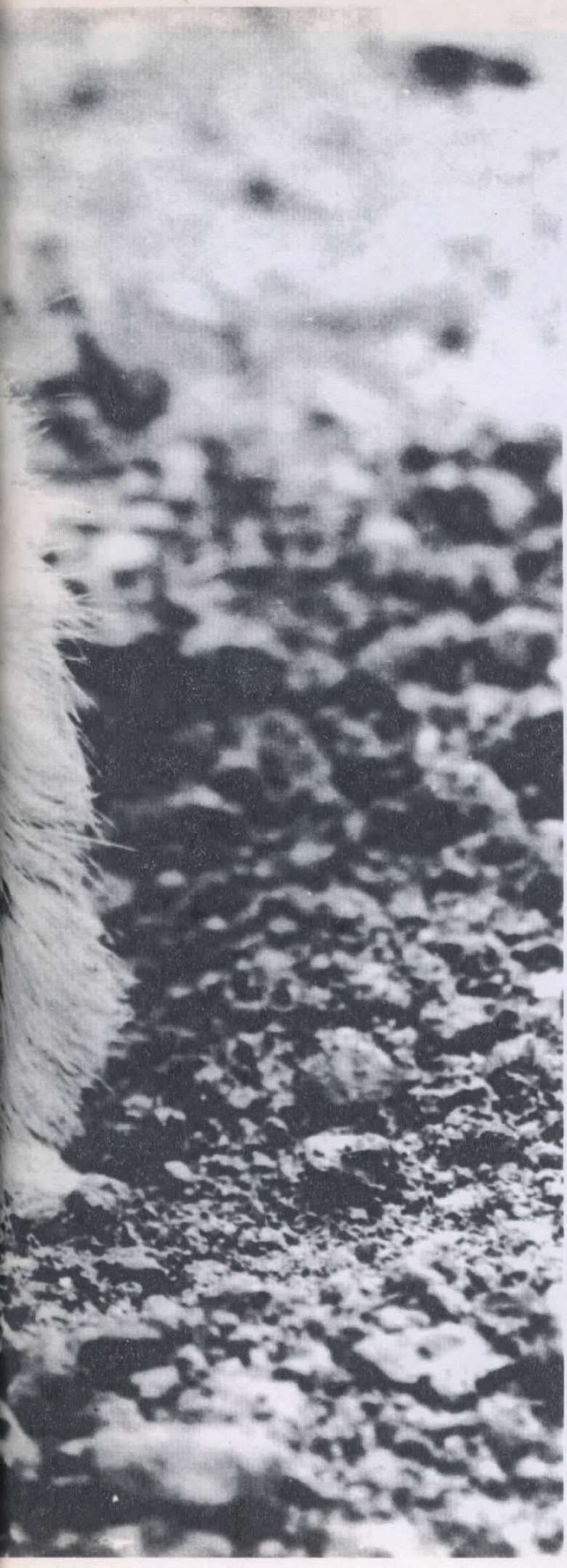
Under four foot long, with short legs and a long tail, the jaguarindi looks more like an otter. Jaguarindis are solitary creatures, hunting rabbits, rats and mice and birds and avoiding man and other animals.

They can be grey or reddish-brown but very little about their habits is known. The Doctor wondered whether he would hear any more curious noises while he was in this fascinating part of the world. He didn't have long to wait. From a near-by river came what sounded like an extraordinary burping noise. Intrigued, the Doctor made his way to the river bank, but he saw neither human being nor animal making the noise. Then the Doctor looked in the water. A shoal of very large fish, seven-foot long, were floating on the surface. They were pirarucu fish, which because of the amount of decaying vegetation in the rivers, have to come to the surface to breath. The odd sound was made as the pirarucu expelled the air. It was very loud and could be heard for more than a mile away.

The pirarucu have been a favourite food of the South American Indian tribes for a very long time. They shoot the fish with bows and arrows and then hang them to dry in the sun so the flesh can be eaten later.



Pirarucu fish make a very strange, loud noise



Well, time was passing, and even the Doctor did not have an entirely inexhaustible supply of that precious commodity. He had encountered several of the most fascinating creatures in the South American continent and now the moment had come to move north into Mexico and the deserts of North America. There lives a small furry creature, yellow-brown in colour and about 12 to 14 inches long which looks rather like a marmot.

This little animal is called a prairie dog, and he leads a very sociable life in highly organised colonies. Timid by nature, prairie dogs are surrounded by enemies; rattlesnakes, ferrets, owls, weasels are all unfriendly neighbours for whom a prairie dog makes a welcome meal.

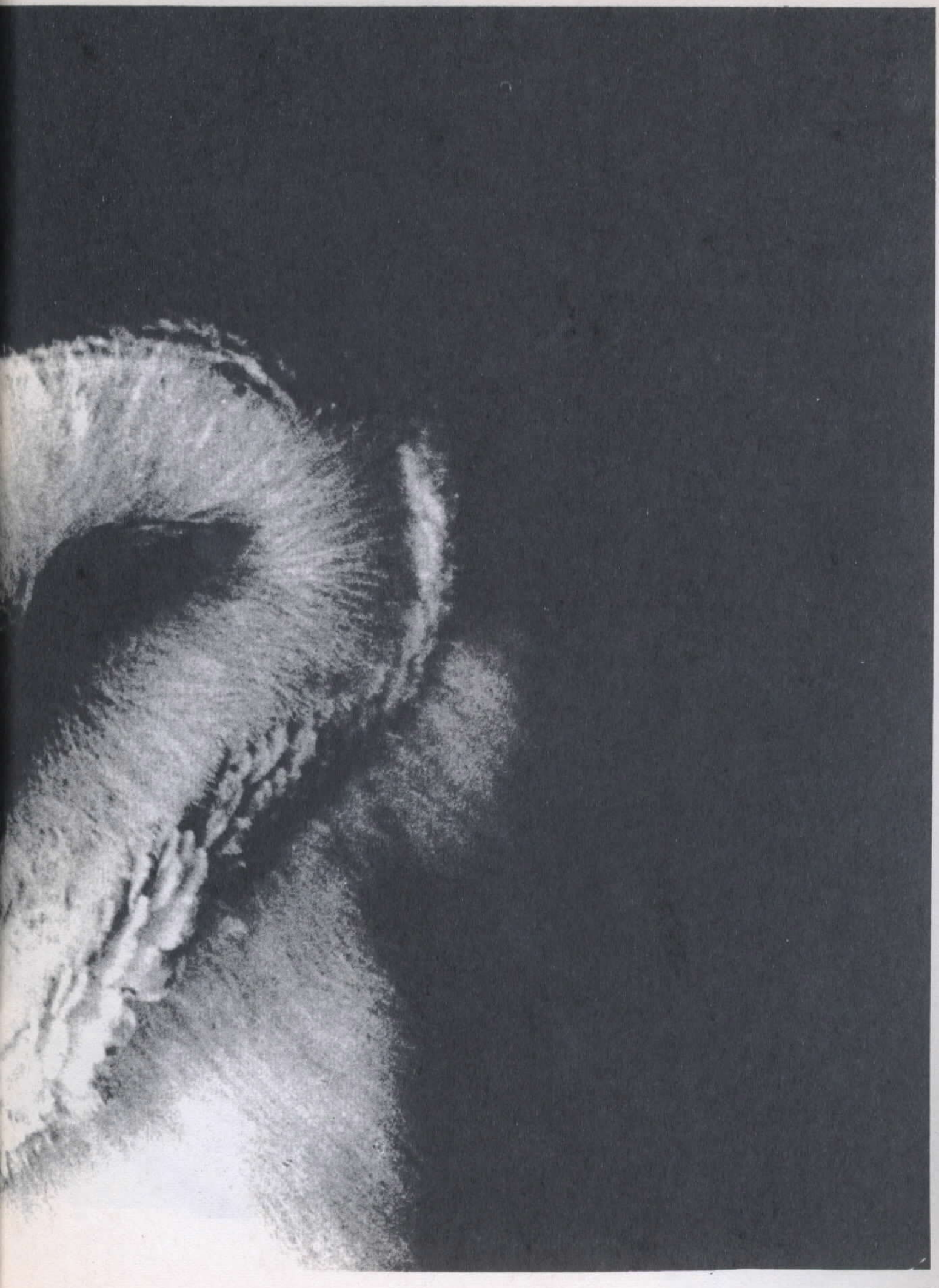
So to protect themselves prairie dogs dig complex burrows which always have more than one exit so that there is a way of escape in an 'emergency'. And whenever a prairie dog family feeds in the open there is a 'guard' posted on the hill who keeps a wary eye open for any predators.

Should any danger threaten the sentinel lets out a piercing whistle and the colony scurries back into their burrows. Beneath the ground the prairie dog is relatively safe, though he does get invaded by a rattlesnake from time to time. These burrows are very extensive and can stretch over a square mile. No doubt it is because this defenceless creature has organised himself so well that there are still many millions of the little animals in North America.

One of the prairie dog's enemies is the barn owl, which is found in most countries of the world. The barn owl has a curious heart-shaped face and it is believed that it acts like a 'sound receiver' which enables the bird to hunt in total darkness because it is able to pick up the slightest sound of its prey through this extraordinary hearing.

This prairie dog may be keeping a look-out for danger

Owls hunt in the dark by detecting the faintest sounds.



Another creature which is at home in the dark is the bat. It is one of the mysteries of nature just how bats are able to fly on the blackest nights, threading their way through dense woods and not even flicking a leaf with their wings. However some experiments suggest that the bat has its own built-in 'radar' system and that it can detect objects in its path through sound waves.

Bats are not birds, but mammals, and they feed their young who cling tightly to their mother's fur as she hunts for food in the night. When the baby bat is old enough he may be left on his own while his mother is out catching supper. If so, he'll be waiting hanging upside down which is the way all bats sleep.

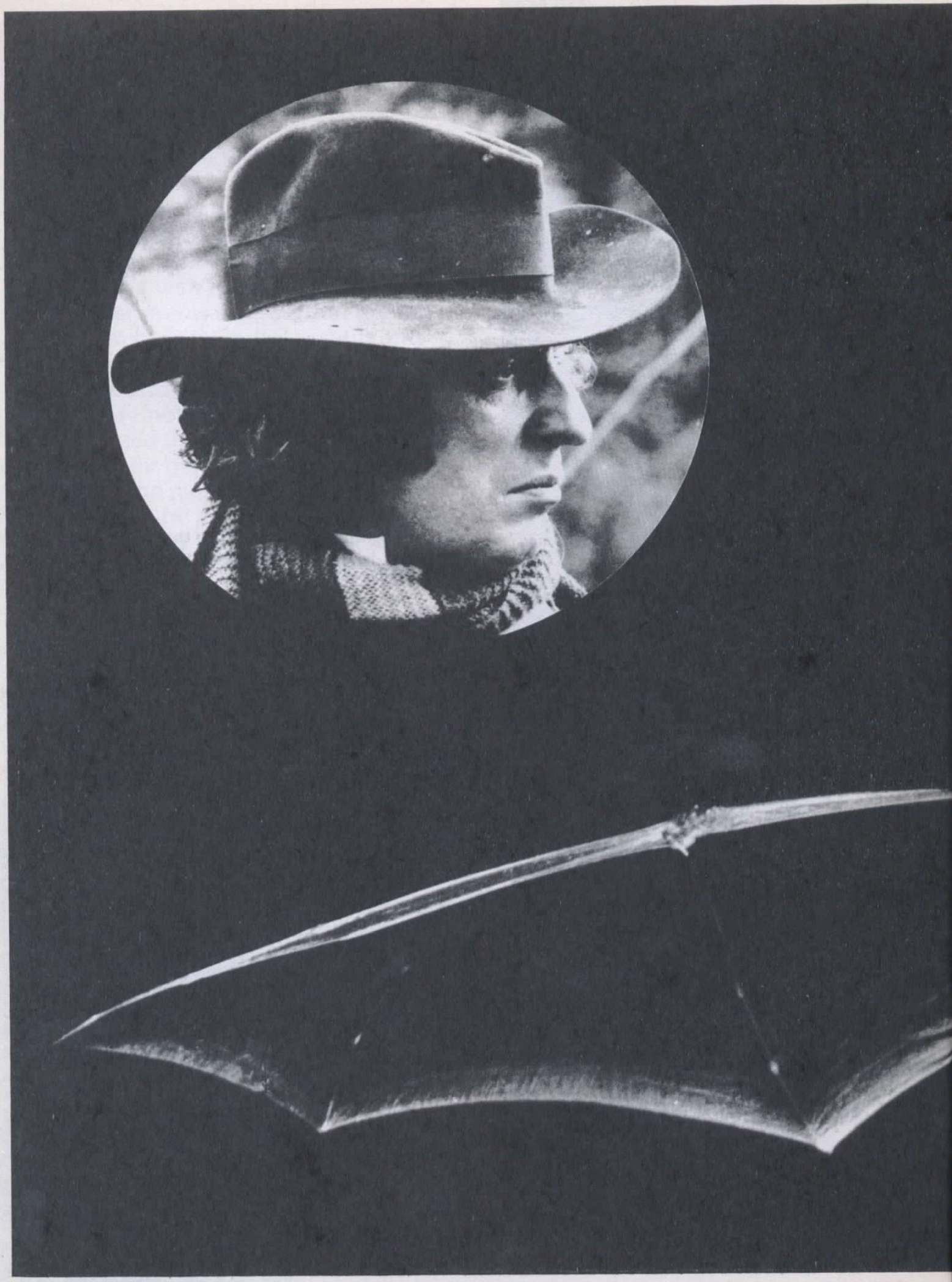
"Most people have the idea that bats are blind," said the Doctor, "But that's not so. They have very weak eyes and they are dazzled by strong sunlight. But they can see." But like many nocturnal creatures, bats become upset if they are disturbed during the day, and they flutter about in a bewildered fashion.

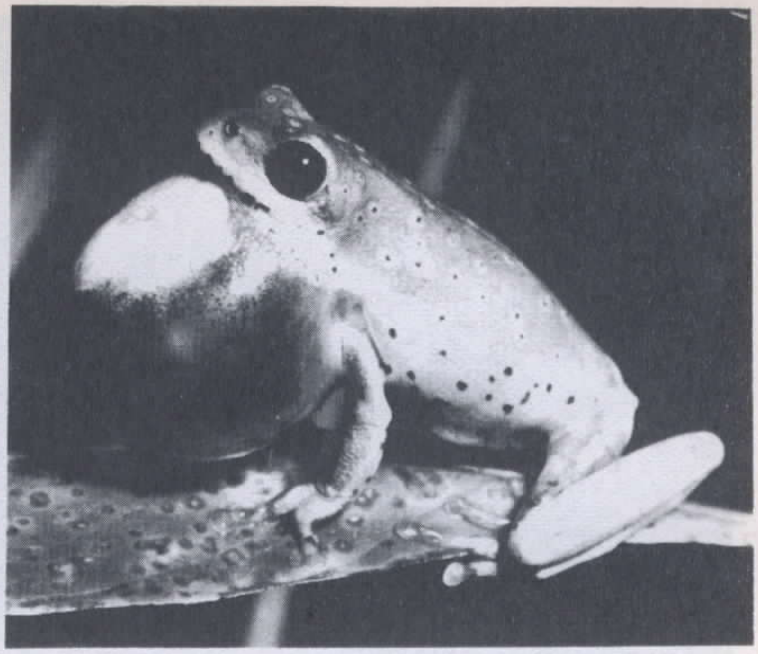
There are many different species of bat, and one of the most dreaded in some parts of the world is the vampire bat. It is not quite as terrible as you might think. Vampire bats do not kill people but they do suck the blood of cattle and can make them weak and ill.

The largest species of bat is the Malay flying fox, so-called because it looks very much like a fox which has been fitted with wings. It is the size of a crow and its wings can measure as much as five feet from tip to tip. When they feed, these flying foxes, which are to be found also in India and Burma, hang from the branches of trees by one foot and 'spear' the fruit with the other foot, holding it while they eat!

Bats hang upside down while they rest. The bat pictured below is a Serotine, which has powerful jaws and teeth

Bats fly at night by using some kind of 'radar'





The tree-frog is a strange little creature. With the small adhesive discs which he has on the end of his toes, and the further help of a sticky 'glue' which emits from them, he can perch and keep his balance almost anywhere. The male frog has a huge sac in his throat, and he makes an enormous amount of noise considering his size. Normally the tree-frog is to be found on branches and leaves, but the females need water in which to lay their eggs. Tree frogs can be kept in captivity, and provided they are properly looked after and given a moist environment, they may live for as long as twenty years.

The tree-frog is hard to spot but the male makes a loud noise with the sac on his throat

The Doctor was just counting himself extremely fortunate to have discovered so many interesting creatures and at the same time having escaped the evil forces which had conjured him into meeting King Kong and the dreaded Dracula when . . .

"Oh, dear," said the Doctor, and put his hands to his forehead. A fierce gust of wind blew up seemingly from nowhere and salty spray swished into the Doctor's face. Coming towards him at enormous speed was the vast shape of a great white shark. This one appeared to have been manifested straight out of that movie called 'Jaws' although white sharks do exist and they are very real.

They grow up to thirty feet in length, weigh about two tons, and — as the Doctor knew only too well — eat almost anything, including humans.

In its immensely powerful jaws are saw-like triangular teeth, and the white shark will attack almost any animal. It is guided to its prey by a sense of smell and a trace of blood is sufficient for it to attack straight away.

Sharks have been known to eat all sorts of strange objects — logs, wooden beams, tyres all of which they swallow whole.

Normally they tend to feed at sunset and sunrise, and it is then that they are most likely to come inshore and, if they are one of the species which attack people, sometimes maim and kill unwary bathers.

However since sharks mostly inhabit warm waters it is unlikely that anyone swimming off the coast of Britain would ever be in any danger. This was small comfort to the Doctor, who for the moment knew he could not break the force-field around him.

But he did the next best thing which was to use the power to bring about an instant change of scene. He suspected it would deliver him into the clutches of some other creature, but at least he would escape those terrible shark teeth ....

The giant shark that appeared in 'Jaws'

It was very cold, and an icy wind almost tore the Doctor's scarf from his neck; and if he had not held on to his hat that, too, would have blown off into the thick snow.

Looking upwards the Doctor recognised the unmistakable peak of Everest. Looking down he saw a set of one of the largest footprints he had ever seen!

"Oh, no, oh no," groaned the Doctor. "Not the Yeti again." The Doctor remembered having to fight a battle with the Yeti monsters in the London underground — although of course they were aliens in Yeti shape. But was he now destined to encounter the real Yeti?

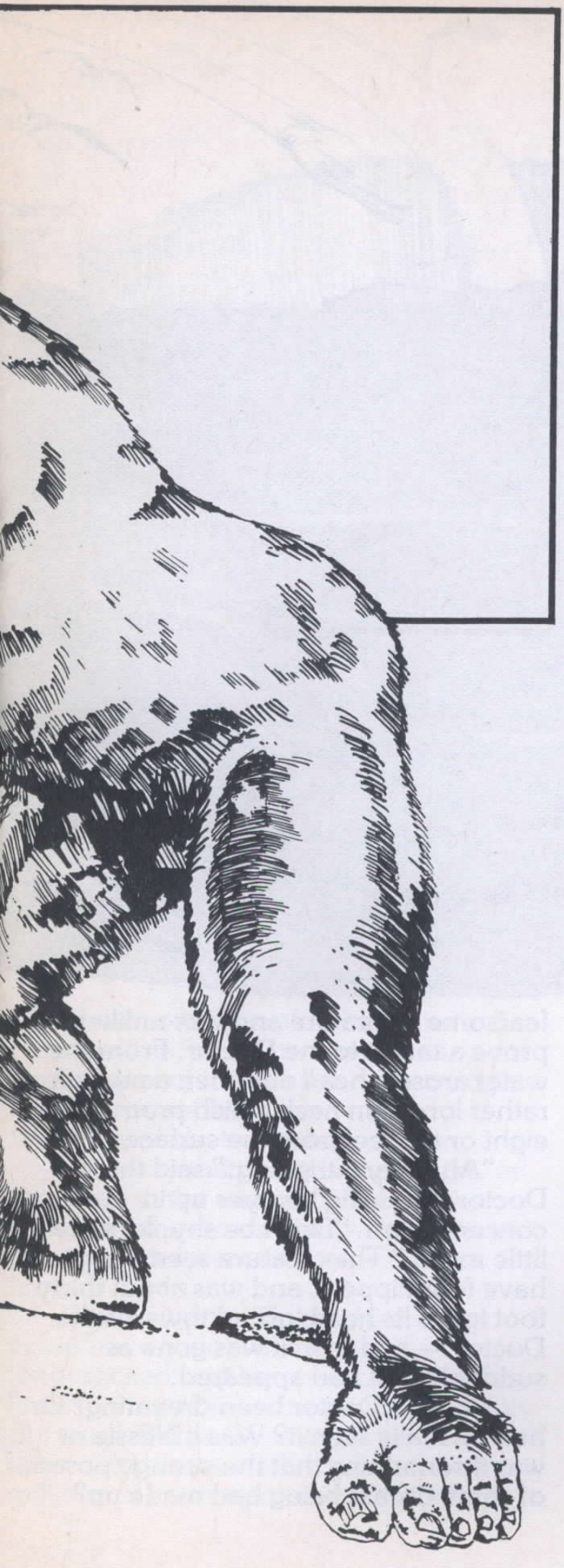
Various Everest expeditions have recorded finding mysterious footsteps in the snow — about 13 inches long and 8 inches wide — apparently made by a five-toed beast.

Certainly the people of the Himalayas have believed in the Abominable Snowman — the yeti creature — for centuries. According to the legend the yeti may be from five to fifteen feet in height and is something between man and ape. It is supposed to have a pointed skull covered with long red hair, and a body covered with matted hair.

Yeti are said to kidnap village maidens and have a liking for strong drink; in order to appease the yeti villagers leave liquor out for him each night.

Whether there really are such creatures has always been a matter of argument. No reliable evidence of their existence — an actual corpse or skeleton — has ever been discovered. On the other hand several Everest climbers claim to have glimpsed a strange beast and Himalayan villagers have been found in possession of what they claim are 'Yeti scalps'.

One recent theory is that the yeti could be the descendant of a Stone Age ape, of which fossils have been found in India and China. This species of ape might have been cut off in the Himalayas



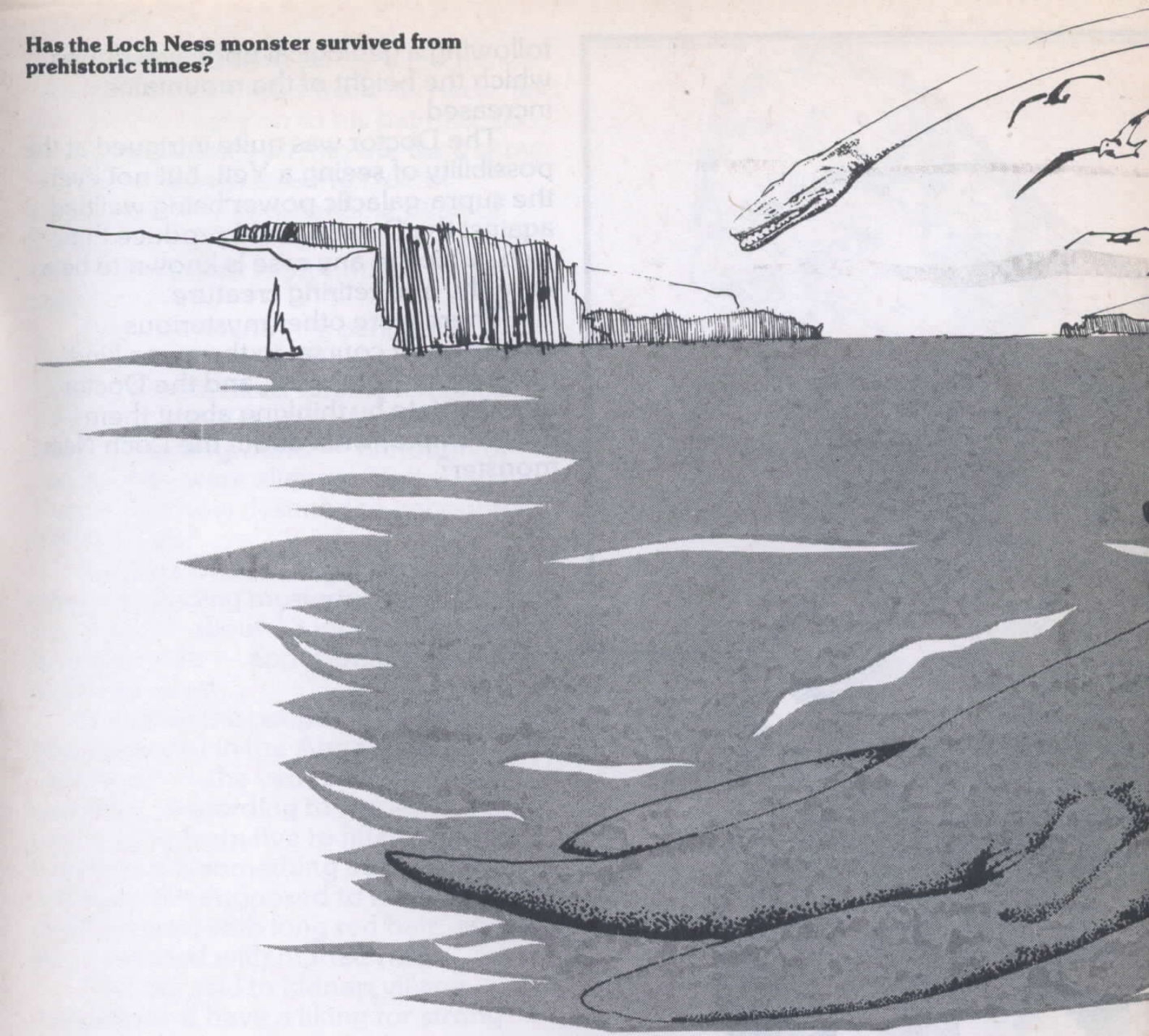
following a geological upheaval during which the height of the mountains increased.

The Doctor was quite intrigued at the possibility of seeing a Yeti, but not even the supra-galactic power being weilded against the Doctor could produce the Yeti, which in any case is known to be a very shy and retiring creature.

There were other mysterious creatures, of course, in the same kind of category as the yeti, and the Doctor tempted fate by thinking about them. For example, what about the Loch Ness monster?

The yeti may be an ancient kind of ape

Has the Loch Ness monster survived from prehistoric times?

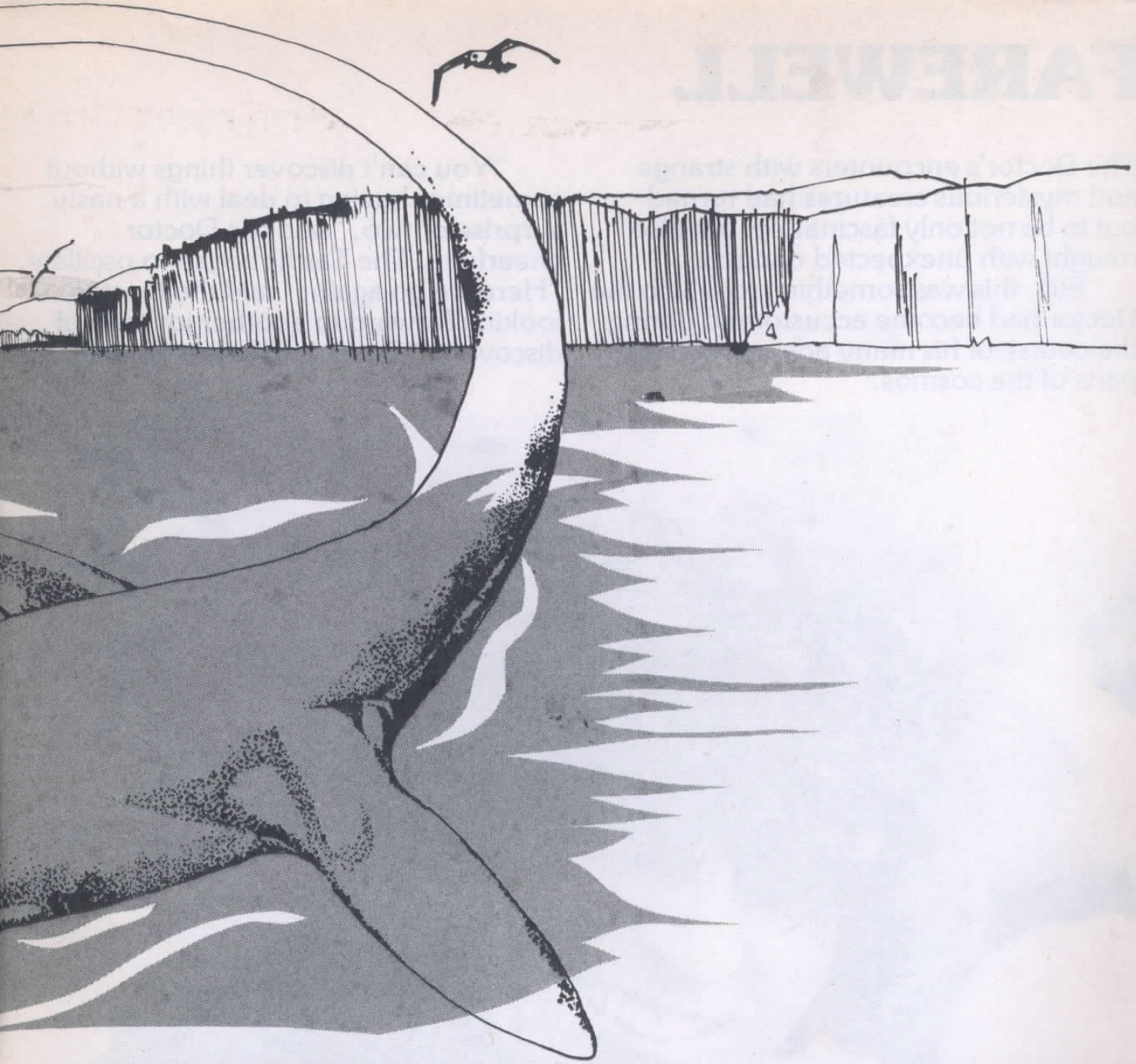


As he expected the Doctor found himself on the shores of the Loch. Scarcely a ripple disturbed the surface of the water, which is many hundreds of feet deep at certain points. He seemed to be on a relatively remote part of its shores because there was neither a road nor any other person in sight.

"Well, come on then," said the Doctor. "Let's have a look at you." The Doctor chuckled happily. First of all because it was a relief to be out of the bitter Himalayan cold — not that it was **very** much warmer — and second because whatever was supposed to lurk in those waters had never done anyone any harm. So it was probably not all that fearsome a creature and was unlikely to prove a threat to the Doctor. From the water arose a head and then a neck; a rather long thin neck which protruded eight or ten feet from the surface.

"Ah, very intriguing," said the Doctor, screwing his eyes up in concentration. "Don't be shy, let's see a little more." The creature seemed to have four flippers, and was about thirty foot long. Its head turned towards the Doctor — and then it was gone as suddenly as it had appeared.

Had the Doctor been dreaming? Or had he really seen it? Was it Nessie or was it something that the strange powers of some distant being had made up?



There are some people who believe Nessie exists, and who have even spent a great deal of time and money trying to take photographs of her — even underwater photographs.

They say that there is a monster, or monsters in the waters of Loch Ness which are the descendants of creatures that inhabited the earth in prehistoric times.

Well, what the Doctor had seen could have been a plesiosaur, long-necked reptilian creatures which lived in the prehistoric seas and certainly **did** exist. But as far as anybody knows all those creatures vanished from the earth millions of years ago; and although it is just possible that through some freak a family of plesiosaurs could have been trapped in Loch Ness before it was closed to the seas, it's not very likely.

More than that, no bones or even eggs have ever been found. So it would be very strange indeed if what had been conjured up for the Doctor's benefit was real.

"But in a world so full of strange and mysterious creatures one can never be sure of anything," said the Doctor. "And anyway it would be very dull if we could never imagine a creature existing — at least the nice friendly ones."

FAREWELL

The Doctor's encounters with strange and mysterious creatures had turned out to be not only fascinating, but also fraught with unexpected dangers.

Still, this was something to which the Doctor had become accustomed during the course of his many adventures in all parts of the cosmos.

"You can't discover things without sometimes having to deal with a nasty surprise or two," said the Doctor cheerfully. The Tardis began to oscillate. "Here we go again," said the Doctor, looking forward to another journey of discovery. "See you all soon. Goodbye."

All photographs from Topham except those on pages 4, 5, 6, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25 and 26.

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